

A
COLLECTION

Of the several Late

Petitions, &c.

TO THE

Honourable House,

VIZ.

- I. *The Ladies Petition.*
- II. *The Batchellors Remonstrance.*
- III. *The Chaplains Petition.*
- IV. *The Poets Proposal.*
- V. *The Widows Petition.*
- VI. *An Act drawn up by a Committee, of Grievances.*

WITH

An Addition, never before Printed, of
a Preface and a Catalogue of above Forty
Petitions, ordered to be drawn up, and Pre-
sented to the Honourable House at their next
Sessions.

L O N D O N, Printed in the Year, 1693.

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THE BOOKSELLER to the READER.

THE following Papers pretend to nothing but innocent Mirth and Pleasantry, and were purposely designed to amuse the Politick part of the Town, who are still troubling themselves and their Neighbours, about matters of State and Debates of Parliament, with something in their own way, but dress'd in a freer and more entertaining manner. As they had the good fortune to be well received, I judg'd it would not be amiss to print them together in one Book, lest they should run the fate of all loose Papers; and after two or three days incumbering the Pocket, be thrown into a Corner, and there buried. Besides, as our Modern Divines judge of the Merits of a Cause by the Success it finds; so I, and the rest of my Brother Booksellers, judge of the Goodness of a Book by the quick Sale of it. We don't pretend to be judges of the Sense, the Style, or the Language, (except two or three of us, that, under the Rose, had better let it alone) but for all that, if a Book sells apace, and circulates nimbly, without pretending to be Conjurers, we may safely affirm, that Mercury is no small Ingredient in the Composition of it. Now these Petitions, or (with my Author's leave) these Trifles happening to sell well, I soon concluded they were good; and having gone so far in my way, it was natural to make another Conclusion, viz. That it was pity they should be lost.

So that if any one shall ask me; Is there any Wit in these Papers? I shall reply, Sir, they sold well. Is the Language Correct? Sir, they sold well. Is the Style easie and clear? Sir, they sold well. In short, if they ask me a thousand Questions to the like purpose, that shall still be the answer. And herein I justify my self by the example of a certain Wise Philosopher, (whose name I cannot call to mind at present; but the next Preface I write, you shall know for certain) who being asked what was the best Qualification to win a Widow? cryed Impudence; What was the second best? Why Impudence: And what was the third best, Impudence still. You see the old Gentleman kept close to his Text.

But if any Courteous Reader demands of me, And why honest Friend do you take upon you to write Prefaces? I design to tell

The Bookeller to the Reader.

him, That I have an hundred and an hundred Presidents in Chancery-Lane, Paul's Church-Yard, and all over the Town, for so doing. Sometimes it so happens that an Author is out of the way, or out of Humour, or out of his Wits, or out of the World, and then who is so fit I pray to perform this Office as the Bookseller, who is principally concerned for the welfare of the Child; as who so fit to supply Mr. Constable's place as Mr. Deputy. But Why did you get none of your Friends to do this same Jobb for you. Under favour, Sir, suppose I have a mind to show my Parts, who shall hinder me? or secondly and lastly, suppose I intend, one of these days, to turn Author in my own defence, since good Authors are so scarce, Where's the mighty harm done? Come, come, Taurum feret, qui viculum tulit; the English of which is, Every thing must have a Beginning: Or be that can write a good Preface, may, in time, arrive to write a good Book.

So much by way of Jest and Railery; but now to be Sober: A Neighbour of mine, four or five Mornings ago, came into my Shop, and after he had shook his Head, and turned up the Whites of his Eyes, I wonder, says he, you'll Print such dangerous things, 'tis an hundred pounds to a penny, but you are summon'd before the House. No, no, Neighbour, quo I, there's no danger of that; our Representatives are better natured than to vent their Indignation upon a little barnum's March; and better employ'd than to condescend so low as to take notice of such humble Trifles. Besides, continued I, can they be offended to see the People are still Jovial and Brisk, or to find them honestly endeavouring to turn a Penny to pay their Taxes. Well, but adds he, you have ruined your self for ever with the Ladies, the Batchellors, the Chaplains, and the Widows. Ay, quo I, if a fine Husband offends the Maids, or a good Wife the Batchellors, or an experienced Bedfellow the experienced Widow, or three Meals a day, with a skin full of Bligg or Punch, the Camp-Chaplains, I am as utterly undone as an Oyfter, and not till then. Say you so, cries he, It's well it's no worse, God boy' Neighbour; so he made a Leg and went out of the Shop.

And now, honest Reader, not to contradict the old Proverb, which says, Charity begins at home, I wish, in the first place, that I may have the good luck to sell Ten thousand of these Petitions: And when that's done, I wish, in the next place, to meet thee, one Evening at some honest Tavern, where I design to give thee a Bottle of Wine, drink Prosperity to the King and Parliament, and smooch a Ripa together. Yours, &c.

The Petition of the LADIES of *London* and *Westminster* to the Honourable House for HUSBANDS.

WE know you are harra's'd with Petitions from all Quarters of the Nation; for to whom should the miserable Subject apply himself for a Redress of his just Grievances, but to this awful Assembly? At present you have no less than the Safety of all *Europe*, and that of *England* in particular, depending upon your Supplies and Assistance; yet you sometimes condescend to entertain your selves with Things of far less Importance. Give us leave therefore to lay our lamentable Condition before you, and to expect a relief from your generous appearing in our behalf. We demand nothing but what is highly reasonable and advantageous to the State, nothing but what the Laws of God, Nature, and the End of our Creation plead for, and next to what immediately employs your Counsels at this juncture, we offer a Matter of the highest Consequence that ever came within your Wallow.

You need not be reminded with what Scorn and Contempt the Holy State of Matrimony has of late years been treated: 'Every daffy Scribler of the Town has pelted it in his wretched Limps; it has been persecuted in Sonnet, ridicul'd at Court, exposed on the Theatre, and that so often, that the Subject is now exhausted and barren; so that if no new Efforts have been lately made against our Sexes Grand Charter, we are not to ascribe it either to the good Nature or Conversion of the Men, but only to the want of fresh Matter and Argument. What afflicts us most is to find Persons of good Sense and Gravity, considerable for their Estates and Fortunes, so shamefully laid aside from their Duty by the feeble Sophistry of these little unthinking Rhiming Creatures, grant us see that in their ridiculous Song to the Tune of a *Dog with a Bottle* shall make a greater Impression upon them than all the wholesome Precepts of the Apostles put together. Now we find a third of mankind left to murther, and murthered, and it has been said, and said true, One, forsooth, is mortally afraid lest his head should ake within a fortnight, or so, after Marriage; and yet makes no Confidence of filling his Glass every Night with filthy stinking Wine, which in all probability will sooner give him a Fever than a Wife, consider a pair of Horns upon him. A second professes he has an invincible Aversion to the suckling of Children, and sucking of Oracles, though the Soverain of a whole day and Night, amidst the eternal Quarrels of the two Wines, and the endless Disputes of the No-Potterians. A third is apprehensive of something called *Caroline Lectures*, as the only way to Hell, and to talk; and yet suffers themselves to be thus sold by common ungodly Blackguards.

stitutes: A Fourth has a great respect to his own dear Person, and thinks a Wife will drain him to mere Skin and Bones, who for all that so manages himself, as to have occasion to visit Dr. Wall twice a Quarter. Lastly, the graver sort exclaim at the Caudles, the Pins, the Midwives, the Nurses, and other Concomitants of Wedlock; they pretend the Taxes run high, and that a Spouse is an expensive Animal; little considering that they throw away more upon their dearly beloved Vanities than would maintain a Wife, and half a dozen Children.

These are the common Topics against Matrimony; and yet, to behold the Vanity of these Pretences, they immediately disappear and vanish, as soon as a good Fortune comes in their way. Show the Sparks but a rich Heiress, or an old griping Alderman's Daughter, and they soon forget Curtain-Lectures and Cuckoldom, Consumptions and Skeletons, Pins and Caudles, Impertinence and Confinement, with the rest of their terrible Objections. Then you hear not a Syllable of Liberty; but oh, what a blessed, what a comfortable thing is a Wife! Nay, a Widow, though past Fifty, and as ugly as one of the Witches in *Macbeth*; if she has but store of Money, shall go down as glibly with them as the New Oaths for Preferment at Court; without the least Wry Face or remorse of Conscience; and the vain Coxcombs think themselves as happy, as if they had got both the *Indies* in their possession.

But though the Laity, not to mince Matters, have almost universally degenerated in this wicked Age; yet we bless Heaven that our Sex has still found the Benefit of the Clergy, and that the Churchmen have been our surest and best Friends all along. Had not these pious Gentlemen taken pity of our Condition, how many superannuated Chamber-Maids had lain neglected, how many languishing Farmer's Daughters gone the way of all Flesh without propagating their kind? Whatever Prevarications they have made in other parts of the Bible, we have to our unspeakable Comfort found that they have kept constant to the Text, *Increase and multiply*; and indeed it was but reasonable that these People who are every Moment trumping their *Jure Divino* upon the World, should by their own Example support and countenance that sort of Life, which is as much *Jure Divino* as the Priesthood.

We never questioned, notwithstanding the unwearied Attempts of our Adversaries to render Marriage contemptible both in their Writings and Conversation; but that Nature, meer Nature without any Endeavours of our own, would have reduced the Men long since to a true sense of their Duty, had it not been for the two following Impediments. The first is *Wine*, which we that are Maids have as much reason to complain of as those that are married. 'Tis a burning shame, and it highly concerns the Wisdom of the Nation to prevent it, that the young Fellows of the Town should so scandalously abandon themselves to the Bottle. They ply their Glasses too warmly to think of any thing else; and if the Liquor happens to inspire them with any kind Inclinations, the next Street furnishes them with store of Conveniences to relieve their Appetite. And this leads us to the second Block in our way, which is the intolerable multitude of *Mistresses*, who to the great prejudice of the Publick, divert the course of those streams, which would otherwise run in the regular Channel of Matrimony. As long as these contraband Commodities are encouraged or tolerated, it cannot be expected that virtuous Women should bear a good Market price, or that Marriage should flourish.

It would look like Affectation or Vanity in those of our Sex, who in the malicious World suppose to be conversant in nothing else but Books of Receipts and Romances, to acquaint so experienced and learned a Body as yours is, how highly Marriage was revered, and how industriously cultivated by the wisest Governments in the World. The Examples of *Athens* and *Sparta* are too notorious to be long insisted upon. Those were glorious Places for us, poor Women, to live in; a Man there could neither be Church Warden or Confitable, nay, nor be concerned in the meanest, most scoundrel Parish Offices, unless he was married. An old musty Bachelor was pointed at like a Monster, they looked upon such a one to be disaffected to the State, and therefore as constantly indicted him every Quarter Sessions for letting his Talent lie unemployed, as now we do *Jacobites*, and false Retailers of News. The same Policy was observed at *Rome*, where the *Fus Trium Liberorum*, the Privilege of those that had got three Children, was one of the greatest Favours the Emperor could bestow upon a Subject, and was counted with as vigorous an Application as a Knighthood is now adays. By this means that victorious City arrived to the Empire of the World; and we, if we wou'd beat the *French* into better Manners, must follow the same Conduct: But it grieves our hearts to consider that in a Christian, and much more in a Protestant Country, we are forced to stir up the Charity of well-disposed Persons by citing Pagan Examples.

We therefore humbly petition you, that for the Increase of their Majesties Liege people, in whom the Power and Strength of a Nation consists, and for the utter discouragement of Celibacy, and all its wicked Works, you would be pleased to enact,

First, That all Men of what Quality and Degree soever, should be obliged to marry as soon as they are one and Twenty; and that those Persons who decline so doing, shall for their Liberty, as they are pleased to mis call it, pay yearly to the State, which we leave to your Discretion to make as great or as little as you shall think fit, one Moiety whereof shall go to the King towards the Payment of his Army in *Flanders*, and the rest be distributed amongst poor House-keepers, that have not sufficient to maintain their Wives and respective Families, by such married Officers as you shall nominate and appoint.

Secondly, That no Excuse shall be admitted, but only that of natural Frigidity or Impotence; which that it may not be pretended when there is no just occasion for it, and likewise that impotent Persons may not, to the disappointment of their Spouses, enter into the holy State of Matrimony, there shall be erected in every County in *England* a Court of Judicature, composed of half a score experienced Matrons or Midwives, who by a *Writ de Maris als supellestle inspicienda*, may summon or cause to be summoned all such people as pretend the above-mentioned Excuse, or are justly suspected thereof.

Thirdly, since it is found by Experience that the generality of young Men are such Idolaters of the Bottle, and that Wine is the most powerful Rival which the Ladies have reason to be jealous of, that no Person whatsoever shall be privileged to enter a Tavern who is not married, under pain of having his Wig and gilt Snuff-box confiscated *Toties, Quoties*.

Fourthly, That every Poet, or pretender to be a Poet, or any one that has hired a Poet to write any Play, Satyr, Song or Lampoon, to the derogation of the Matrimonial State, shall be obliged to marry before *Lady-day* next ensuing, and to make a solemn

Recant:

Reeantation of all, and every wicked thing by him uttered in any Play, Satyr, Song or Lampoon to the derogation of the Matrimonial State; that all such disaffected Papers shall be called in, and publickly burnt by the hands of twelve City-Clergy Men's Wives, on next St. *Valentine's* Day.

Lastly, that to prevent the grievous Multitudes of, and frequent resorts to Misses and Harlots, every Person of Quality pretending to keep a Miss, after the commencing of this Act, shall be enjoined in order to his farther Punishment, to keep a Regiment of Foot for his Majesties Service upon the Rhine; or in case he chuses to disband her, to dispose of her in Marriage to his Footman and Groom, and allow them wherewith to set up a Coffee-house. And as for the Inferior Harlots, all Justices of Peace and Constables shall execute the Laws against them.

Having thus, most noble Patriots, laid open our Grievances before you, we doubt not but you will take effectual Care to redress them. Could you condescend so low as to debate about making the Rivers *Wye* and *Lug* navigable; and will you not endeavour as much as in you lies to unite the *Male*-streams with the *Female*? Could you think it worth the while to take care of the propagation of Woods, the draining of the Fens, and the converting of Pastures into Arable Land; and will you not much more encourage the propagation of Mankind, the draining of the superfluous Humours of the Body Politick, and provide that so many longing young Ladies shall not lie unploughed, unharrowed, and uncultivated? Besides there was never a fitter occasion for such a *Bill*, than what offers it self at present: The mighty numbers of Men that our Wars carry off in *Flamanders*, with the little or no Increase at home to balance the loss; and what ought to be no small Argument with you, the few unmarried Sparks that tarry behind are of late grown so imperious and proud in their demands, that nothing will go down with them now but an Heiress. Here are an infinite number of Advocates to incline you to be Kind to our Cause, Wit and Youth, Beauty and good Nature, besides the Publick Advantage, and the Protestant Religion plead for us; But what cannot fail to move even hearts of Marble, this very Petition is subscribed by ten thousand Green-Sickned Maidens.

That single Consideration, we know, will prevail with you to espouse our Quarrel therefore Matrimony to its Primitive Splendor; and lastly to destroy Celibacy, as effectually as you have done Popery. Which will oblige your Petitioners,

At in Duty bound ever to pray, &c.

This Petition is Subscribed by Threescore thousand Hands, and never a crack'd Maidenhead or Widow amongst them.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Mary Want-man*, the Fore-maid of the Petitioners, and Sold by *A. Roper* in *Fleetstreet*, 1693.

*An humble Remonstrance of the BAITCHE-
LORS, in and about London, to
the Honourable House, in Answer to a
late Paper, Intituled A Petition of
the Ladies for Husbands.*

Gentlemen,

YOU are the Sanctuary of the oppressed; and 'tis natural for the Subject whenever he finds himself unjustly treated, to fly to his Representatives for a Redress. You that have so effectually mortified *Arbitrary Power* even in a Great Monarch, will certainly never cherish it in a lower Station; and this inclines us to hope that the Ladies will not find that Encouragement at your hands which their Vanity prompted them to expect. Though their Petition to you speaks in a very submissive Stile; yet for all that they can assume a different sort of Language in other Places. There they not only dispute the Superiority with the Men, but even pretend to the Right of *Conquest* over them; for their *Grand-mother Eve*, they say, *triumphed over the weakness of our great Grand-father Adam in Paradise*; and no doubt on't had insisted upon that Article before you, but that your House last week so punished the unpallatable Doctrine of *Conquest*, to disavow them of this illegal pretence, which is prejudicial to the Liberty and Privilege of our Sex, we have examined all the Old Records, but cannot find the least appearance to colour such a Plea. At present we shall dismiss this Point to descend into the Particulars of their Petition, and leave it to you at last to decide the Controversie now depending between us.

They complain that the Holy State of Matrimony, has of late years been very irreverently spoken of, that it has been rhymed to Death in Sonnet, and murdered in *Effgie* upon the Stage. Now we would not be guilty of that ill breeding, to say that the Ladies all along found the Matter, and the Satyrists only found the Words. However we are assured from all hands, that those Persons who have taken the greatest pains to expose that Holy State, were all of 'em married (to prove which we could name a famous *Abdicating Poet*, if we were minded)

mind'd) and we hope the Ladies don't expect we should either defend or condemn them till we are married our selves. and consequently in a Capacity to judge on which side the Truth lies. At present we know no more of Matrimony, than a meer Land-man knows of the Sea; every Gazette tells him of abundance of Wrecks; but for all that he'll venture to Sea in hopes of making 50 *per Cent.* by Exchange of his Commodities.

But to make amends for this melancholy Scene, they very devoutly thank Heaven in the next place, that their Sex found the Benefit of the Clergy, when the Laity had in a manner abandoned them. Pray, Gentlemen, observe what Returns of Gratitude the Ladies have made their best and surest Cards the Churchmen for this their Loving Kindness. One wou'd have thought they might at least have allow'd their ancient Friends the first Choice of the Vintage; 'tis no more than what the *French* do to the *Scotch* Merchants at *Bordeaux* out of respect to their old Alliance; but we find no such thing. Old super-annuated House-keepers with a Maiden head defunct, and Farmers Daughters, are the best Presents they give the poor Church; so that on this Account serve the Christian Parsons, as their Predecessors, the Pagan Priests, did their Deities, who used to complement *Jupiter* with the Guts and Garbidge, and reserved the remainder of the Bullock for themselves. After all, whether this happens by their own Fault, or no, the Levites are made but a civiler sort of Scavengers to carry off the Dust and Rubbish of the Sex, so that the Ladies may spare their Thanks to them if they please; for 'tis we of the Laity only that are in their Debt for this great Civility.

After this, Gentlemen, the Ladies are pleas'd to avouch, that if it had not been for a certain damn'd Liqueur call Wine, the Men by the meer Impulse of Nature had been long since reduced to their Duty. Here by the word *Duty* they plainly insinuate a *Conquest*; and therefore we humbly beg that their Petition may be sent to the *Palace-Tard*, and there served *Secundum usum Sarum*. In the mean time, 'tis a mystery to us what makes the Ladies vent their Spleen so furiously upon poor Wine, which by the bye never meant the least harm in its Life to the God of Love's Subjects, unless they intend to monopolize all the drinking to themselves; or else since their Sex has been so familiar with Brandy, blasphemed by the Name of cold Tea, a Jury of Red-nosed Midwives have pronounced Wine to be a feeble, impotent Creature in comparison of that. They wonder why the Men should scruple to marry out of fear of Cuckoldom, and yet not scruple to drink stumm'd Wine for fear of a Fever. To which we reply that the Case is extremely different. Not one Man in an hundred gets a Fever by drinking; at the same time, scarce one in a hundred that is married escapes Cuckoldom. And, Gentlemen, is not that great odds?

They wou'd have you pass it into a Law, That every Man should be oblig'd to marry immediately after Twenty one; and in case he refuses so to do, to pay a good round Sum yearly for his *Liberty*: Though we are all of us agreed that *One and Twenty* is somewhat of the soonest to begin at. For why should a Man be forbidden to travel upon the Road, unless he sets out exactly at Sun-rising?

rising; yet out of Complaisance to the Ladies we are willing to let it pass, though we are certain that half the Racers will be foundered before *Thirry*, provided always (and to be sure they'll never dislike that Word either in an Act of Parliament, or out of an Act of Parliament) that all Virgins or reputed Virgins, who are passed the Age of One and twenty, and have wherewithal to set up some honest, well-chined younger Brother, but tarry in expectation of striking a Country Squire or Alderman's Son, shall be likewise amerced the same Sum for *their Maiden-heads*. The Ladies perhaps will here object that 'tis hard to be taxed for an invisible Estate; but we say, No. We can name them a hundred Tradesmen here in the City, that since the Revolution have paid for what they never had; those for instance that have been rated at 400 *l.* when they were not really worth one; and yet so valuable a thing is Reputation, whether we deserve it or no, lost nothing by the Bargain.

They would have none excused from Marriage, but only the impotent and frigid (which by the bye, Gentlemen, is full as severe as if you should vote that all must troop to the Wars but the Parsons) and desire you to erect a Court in every County, consisting of half a score experienced Matrons, who shall have full Authority to examine all Persons whom they suspect to carry *clipp'd Money* about them, for fear they should put upon their Spouses, when it is not in their Power to change it. Pray not altogether so hasty, fair Ladies. Let your Court have some Men in it, and not all Women: Then we may expect to have Justice done us; for experienced Matrons are too much a Party concerned to be trusted by the selves. We demand whether it be convenient that only Vintners and Ale-Drapers should have the sole Right of determining *Measures*: Vintners never think the Measures small enough; but it may so happen that your experienced Matrons, *Anglice*, your Midwives, may be of a different Opinion, and so think no Measure large enough. Gentlemen, do but remember the *Tryers* under the late Reign of *Fanaticism*; they were a parcel of Inquisitor-Divines set up by the then-no-Government, to licence all such Persons that were to be dispatched into the Vineyard. Now these conscientious Judges if they had a *Quarrel* to a Man, certainly rejected him, and put him by: though perhaps he was Master of a more unexceptionable *Talent* than several others that had passed the *Pulpit-Master* before him. This needs no Application.

They complain of the excessive multitude of Misses and Harlots in and about the Town, who, as they express it, divert the Course of those Streams that would otherwise run in the regular Channel of Matrimony. 'Tis a sad Truth, we confess it, the number of these Interlopers is very grievous; and yet 'tis as sad a Truth that the Petitioning Ladies have occasion'd it. Let them but leave quarrelling about *Joinsures*, and carry a little more Christian Complaisance about them, and the other Fry would disappear in a moment: For Whores in a State are like Copper-farthings in the way of Trade, only used for the Convenience of readier Change. But though these obdurate Females are really accessory to the great Increase of Misses, they would have every Person of Quality who keeps one in his own Defence, pay a good swinging Fine to the Government.

Government. Is this reasonable or fair? Would Governour *Waller*, do ye think, have done like a Gentleman if he had fined his Heroes of *London-Derry* for feeding on Horse-Flesh, contrary to the Statute, when they had nothing else to help themselves with. 'Tis the same in all Cases where there's no choice but downright necessity.

They would have you enact, since they find Wine is so potent a Rival, that none but married Men shall have the Privilege of entering into a Tavern, that is modestly speaking, of being drunk. With all our hearts, Gentlemen, provided always that none but married Women shall be licensed to appear at the Theatre, Chocolate-house, *Whitehall* or the Park; or if they do, that any vigorous Cavalier shall have full Liberty to carry them off, without incurring the Fate of poor Sir *John Johnson*.

To present you at one view with the Merits of the Cause. The Ladies are weary of lying alone, and so are we: They would fain be advantageously married, and so would your humble Servants. The Quarrel therefore on their side is unjustly begun. They look upon us to be their Adversaries, whereas we have the same kind Inclinations to their Sex, as any of our Fore-fathers, the same Desires, the same Wishes, by the same Token we heartily believe they have equal Beauty, and equal, if not superiour, Charms to any of their Sex before them. But as in a long Tract of Time Innovations cannot fail to start up; so the Ladies either presuming on their own Strength, or on the Inadvertency of the Men, have trump'd up several New Doctrines upon us. A Courtship, as the Ladies are pleas'd to order it, is now the greatest Penance any Man in the World can undergo. We must swear as many Oaths as would serve one of his Majesties largest Garrisons for a Twelve-month, till we are believed. We must treat them like Goddesses, lie prostrate at their Feet, make Presents so expensive and numerous, that perhaps the Wife's Portion will scarce make amends for what the Husband extorted from us. Because *Jacob* could serve two Apprenticeships for his *Rebekah*, they imagine that we must do the same; not considering that the Sacrot *des Merhuscles* and Patriarchs is quite extinct, and that this old Testament-Love, were he in our Circumstances, who begin to decay at Thirty, would have taken wiser and better Measures.

Gentlemen,

These are our Sentiments upon this Subject: And as we don't doubt the Justice of this Honourable House, so we little question but that our Cause will prevail. In a Word, Let Love be encouraged, and Cruelty and Coynefs be punished.

And your Perseverers as in Duty bound shall ever pray.

L O N D O N,

Printed for, and sold by the Book-selling Bachelors in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1693.

(1)

THE

Chaplains Petition

TO THE

HONOURABLE HOUSE

For Redress of Grievances.

By one of the Camp Chaplains.

1.
S Ince the Ladies 'gainst Men
Have to Paper put Pen
By way of Most humble Petition,
In hope your good pleasure
Will once be at leisure
To mend their now Scurvy Condition.

2.
And since you allow
That impertinent Crew,
Your Patience to weary and vex,
With a thing of no moment,
That has small weight, or none in't,
But's as Idle and Light as their Sex.

3.
We, humble Famelicks,
Divinity's Reliques,
In plain English, Chaplains Domestick;
To make known our grievance
For you to relieve once,
On your Door do our earnest Request stick.

4.
Viz. Be it Enacted,
 That as we've contracted,
 Our Salaries may be Paid us :
 That when we're dismiss'd ill
 We may not go whistle,
 As an ord'nary Footman or Maid do's.

5.
 For as to the Land all,
 It will be a Scandal
 To see Sons of Levi go Thread-bare ;
 Even so to be sure,
 If the Pastor is poor,
 His Flock will ne're greet him with Head bare.

6.
 Next, when we've said Grace,
 Let's at Table have place,
 And not sculk among the Waiters :
 Or come in with the Fruit
 To give thanks, and sneak out,
 To Dine upon half empty Platters.

7.
 But besides store of Dishes
 (One part of our Wishes)
 To fortifie Maw Sacerdotal :
 Eleemosynary Funk,
 And leave to be Drunk,
 We humbly desire you to Vote all.

8.
Item, Pray make us able
 To command Steed in Stable,
 When we are dispos'd *ad ridendum* :
 And if we want Boots,
 Whips, Spurs, or Sartoots,
 Oblige surly Groom straight to lend them.

9.
 Nor let our great Patrons,
 Or their ruling Matrons,
 Read the Butlers a Juniper Lecture,
 If sometimes they pass
 To our hands a stoin glass,
 Or some little Orts of Confecture.

10.

When long we have serv'd,
 And Preferment deserv'd,
 Let's not miss of our just Expectations;
 By every Fopp's Letter
 For his Friend, that's no better,
 Or our Patron's more Block-head Relations.

11.

For 'tis cause of grieving
 To see a good Living
 Which our Thoughts had long been fixt on,
 Be giv'n to a Wiggon
 With no more Religion,
 And Learning much less than his Sexton.

12.

Nor yet let Matrimony,
 The worst sort of Simony,
 Be the Price of our Presentations:
 Nor to wed a cast Mistress
 When she's in great distress,
 Our requisite Qualification.

13.

And if't be our chance
 To serve against *France*,
 At Sea, on the *Rhine*, or in *Flanders*;
 We earnestly sue t' ye,
 That exempt from all duty
 We may Dine with our Pious Commanders.

14.

Then Brandy good store,
 With several things more,
 Which we Sons o'th' Church have a right in:
 But chiefly w' intreat,
 You'll never forget
 To excuse us from Preaching and Fighting.

15.

Let not a Commission
 So change the condition
 Of him that just carried a Halbert;
 That a Dunce of no Letters
 Should Hector his Betters,
 For truly we cannot at all bear t.

16.

Nor when the War's done,
 Let's be broke ev'ry one,
 To languish in Rags and lye idle;
 Nor be so ill serv'd,
 To be left to be starv'd,
 And kept by a Bear, and a Fiddle.

17.

May it therefore you Please,
 For your own and our Ease
 To relieve us without hesitation:
 For the Grievances told,
 Are as frequent and old
 As any besides in the Nation.

18.

Then on us take Pity,
 And chuse a Committee,
 Let no other Business prevent ye;
 Our request do not spurn,
 Nor Vote it to Burn
 With a *Nemine Contradicente*.

19.

To this if you yield,
 Our Mouths shall be fill'd
 With Encomiums of your Piety;
 Whose excellent Fame
 We will loudly Proclaim
 And worship next that of the Deity.

20.

When thus you remove
 What we disapprove,
 We all, down to Z from the Letter A;
 By Night and by Day,
 Will fervently Pray,
 As in Duty bound, &c. &c.

 L O N D O N,

Printed for the use of the Petitioners; and sold by *Tho.*
Ranew in Fleet-Street near Temple Barr. 1693.

A PROPOSAL OF THE POETS

To raise Their
MAJESTIES
A Sum of Money.

Humbly recommended to the Consideration of the Honourable House.

AT this critical conjuncture, when every good subject ought to set his Hand to the Plow, and use his utmost endeavours to support the present Establishment, we have not been wanting in our respective Stations to shew the sincerity of our Affection to it. As Fighting was never the Talent of our Tribe, we don't pretend to have obliged the Nation that way; nor dare we own our selves guilty of much praying, for that too is out of our Sphere; but with what alacrity and cheerfulness we have drawn our Pens in their Majesties quarrel, let *Paul's Church Yard* and *Westminster-Hall* speak. No sooner is any Victory gained by our Forces in *Flanders*, but we take the Hint immediately, and Record it in Metre: Nay we may without vanity affirm, that could Ryming have done the business, the English had long ago beat their Drums through *Paris*, sent the mighty Monarch to *Grass*, and reduced the *Louvre* and *Versailles* to Ashes. What is a farther indication of our good will to the Government, we have not only rymed but prophesied for it, and if in the heat of inspiration, we have laid the Scene of Conquest somewhat too early, and foretold Triumphs that did not happen at the time appointed, 'tis an error on the right side, and we hope the Kingdom

will as readily excuse it in us, as they have done some modern Interpreters of the Revelations, who but of their great zeal to the Protestant Cause Prophesied the utter downfal of Antichrist wou'd certainly come to pass last year; tho' to our great sorrow we all see that the Man of Sin is still alive and lusty, and in all probability will not be induced to break up House-keeping under two or three year more.

Gentlemen,

You have made us happy under a victorious Prince, whose immortal acquisitions employ our Muses daily. You have preserved our Religion, and 'tis certain we Poets have a regard to that above all things; you have likewise secured us in our properties, and how deeply that point concerns the Sons of Ryme and Harmony we need not mention. For this therefore, and several other important considerations, our Fraternity at the last general meeting, after having considered of several ways to express their gratitude, did unanimously resolve to do what none of their Predecessours ever dreamt of, and in case your illustrious assembly shall think fit to approve of the proposal, offer to raise his Majesty six hundred thousand pound, and that too out of the Territories of Poetry. And tho' as all our ancient Papers inform us, *Parnassus* is *Apollo's* peculiar, and never paid a farthing to any Government before, yet to testify our Loyalty and Acknowledgement for the mighty things that have been done for the Nation of late, we shall cheerfully contribute all that in us lyes, to the ease, benefit and advantage of the publick.

We need not remind you that Poets in all Ages and Countries of the World have been the sole dispensers of Fame and Glory. Now this being an Heroick Age, wherein every person is ambitious of Glory more or less, and yet wou'd rather purchase it with his Money at home, notwithstanding the present scarcity thereof, than acquire it by his Merits abroad, we humbly crave leave that under your authority and protection we may be impow'd to Erect a *Glory Office* in all the principal Corporations and Towns in the Kingdom.

We have so contrived matters that this Office shall hook in all sorts of Customers, Lords and Peasants, Court Ladies and Milk-maids, Clergy and Laity, in short, the whole populace, by what Names or Titles soever dignified and distinguished.

As there are Masons in the City so dexterous at their Trade, that they can build a House to last precisely the time you covenant for, nay can so contrive matters, that the Roof shall tumble the very minute after the Lease is expired: so in our mystery we have Brethren that can write for a Day, for a Week, for a Month, for a Year, and so till Doomsday if the Chapman will go up to the price of it.

In *Grub street* they seldom write for above a Week. Some of the better

better sort in *Pauls Church-yard* and about the *Temple*, with good looking after may last half a dozen years and upwards. The Wits of *Covent-garden* hold a shorter or longer space, according as they mix their colours, and some few among them pretend to confer immortality, and to endure for ever.

Now in proportion to these different Talents of Writing the several prices are to be regulated. Inferiour persons may have their Twelve pennyworth of Glory, (and under that rate we are agreed to sell none), and because Glory of that cheap composition cannot be supposed to keep long, we advise them to renew it twice a year. This branch of the Revenue is to be managed by the good people of *Grubstreet*, and the Commodity thus retailed is chiefly calculated for the Meridian of Dutch Troopers, Prentices, Milk-maids, Porters, Footmen, Farmers Eldest Sons, and Semstresses.

The middle sort of Glory from half a Crown up to twenty Shillings is to be distributed by the City Poet for the time being, and his assistants. And this may indifferently serve Vintners that can palm a new Wine upon the World, Physicians that have broached a new Religion, poor Townsmens Daughters that have snapt an University Fortune, Country Attorneys that can set a whole Corporation together by the Ears, prolifick Divines that to their great renown have piously begotten twenty Children, projectors of Pacing Saddles, and all such useful inventions to the publick, Schoolmasters that have flogged their thousand younger Brothers that have stole great fortunes, puny Tradersmen that from Pins and Pack-thread have scuffled their way into a Common Council-ship. And not to mention any more particulars, all people of middle condition who have done any thing famous and remarkable in their generation.

The highest pitch of Glory, going under the name of *Elixir Immortalitatis* will be onely sold at *Wills Coffee-house* in *Covent-garden*, and will make the purchasers free of Epistles Dedictory, Panegyrics, with the great privilege and emoluments thereunto belonging. The price of it is just twenty Guineas, (wonderful cheap all things considered) and we doubt not will draw in infinite numbers to bid for it, such as Favourites and Courtiers, who wou'd rather buy glory at any rate, than put themselves to the expence of obtaining it by their own deserts. Penurious Aldermen who having no inclination to purchase reputation by building of Alms-houses, may here get it at a cheaper rate. Lords Pages that have advanced themselves to a Sea Commission, but have a mortal aversion to Wooden Legs. The fine dressing talkative Sparks of the Town that take Garrisons, and model Kingdoms over their Claret. In fine all those persons who have a passion for Fame and Glory, but cannot be persuaded to sacri-

lice their ease, and pleasures, or venture a broken Shin for its sake. The only fear is, that to save charges some thrifty people will turn Poets in their own defence; but this inconvenience may easily be obviated by constituting a Supream Office here in Town, which shall have full Authority to place and displace as they shall see fit, and likewise to regulate the numbers of the City and Country Poets, as they have prudently done the numbers of Chairmen at *Whitehall*.

We humbly conceive that the revenue belonging to this Office will in a years time with prudent management raise if not the whole, yet at least four parts of the sum proposed. However if it should happen, to fall short of what we expect (for since the Gentry in two Welch Counties have lately renounced their Gentility to save twenty shillings a quarter, we may probably imagine that some persons for all their pretended Courtship of *Glory* will rather let it alone than turn purchasers) it cannot fail of being made up by the following expedients. We therefore desire that an *Epithalamium Office* may be erected somewhere near the Commons, were all people that pay Scot and Lot to the Parish may be obliged to come for their Wedding Ballad, (without which no Parson shall offer to Marry them under penalty of incurring a Poetical Censure) and that they shall pay either according to their quality, or the goodness of the verse. In the second place we propose an *Elegy-Office*, where not only Epitaphs of all sorts may be had, (without which it shall not be lawful to bury the party deceased) but also Funeral ditties upon Ladies Lap-dogs, Parrots, Monkeys, Lord Mayor's and Alderman's Horfes defunct: adjoining to which may be a *Nativity-Office*, where the Children of all such Parents that are qualified as above mentioned, may have their Nativities Registred in Ryme, and their Fortunes told into the bargain, which last favour will save their Friends the expence of going into *Morefield*, or to *Dr. Saffold's* worthy Successour. For be it known to all the World, the Astrologers interlope upon the Poets, when they pretend to Prophecy.

These Offices you may order to continue so long as the War lasts, whereby their Majesties shall receive six hundred thousand pound yearly. We need not say any thing of the Circulation of Wit, the employing of many indigent persons, and lastly the great encouragement of the Paper Manufacture, all which will by this means be promoted and advanced. VVe only presume to lay our proposal at your Feet, and subscribe our selves Your most obedient Servants the *Poets*.

We have ordered the City Poet, who drew up this Proposal, to communicate this design to our dear Brethren the Poets of *Holland*, and to the rest of the Confederates whom it may concern.

The Petition of the WIDOWS, in and about *London and Westminster* for a Redress of their Grievances.

By the same Solicitor that drew up the Petition for the Ladies.

LAst Week a Petition subscribed by the unmarried Ladies came before you, and what reception it found your selves know best. 'Tis true we wondered to find an Army of Maids, from whom the World usually expects modesty and silence, so emboldened on the sudden as to petition for Husbands, and that in the face of the World. Widows indeed who lye under no such Restrictions, are allowed in all Countries to speak for themselves; and 'tis but reasonable we should, for few besides will submit to the Trouble. 'Tis our Privilege to be obtrusive when we are not heard; and there is one of our Predecessors upon Record in the New Testament, who by Virtue of her everlasting Clack, forced an old musty Gentleman of the long Robe at last to grant her Request.

Now Heaven be praised, we are not unacquainted with Mankind, which the Maids we suppose, won't pretend to; and therefore may appeal to them without infringing the Rules of Decency: We have seen them in their best and weakest Intervals. We know what Weapons they carry about them, and how often they can discharge in an Engagement. We have in our times had very severe Conflicts with them, and sometimes they were uppermost, and then they fell on like Thunder and Lightning; but for all that your Petitioners obliged them soon to quit the Field, and leave part of their Ammunition behind them. Give us leave, good Gentlemen, to talk of these our Combats; for we always fought upon the square, and therefore have no reason to be ashamed of a recital. As we hinted to you before, we have been concerned in several fierce Engagements, and the Men play'd their Sharps against us when we cou'd only produce Flats on our side; and, besides, they drew their heavy Canon upon us, while we were forced to lye by and receive their shot. After all, though we were so disadvantageously set upon, and the Blood shed that happened in these Occasions was always on our part; yet when the Fortune of the Battle began to change, and declare herself in favour of us, we never treated them otherwise than Christians; we never nailed up their Canon when we had it in our possession, so to render it unserviceable for the future, but gave them time to recover breath again, and furnish themselves with a new Train of Artillery: Is not this a generous and honourable way of treating an Enemy? In short (the Devil take that

Word *short*, for your Petitioners mortally hate it) But in fine, we have been intimate with the Men, and the Men have been no le's intimate with us; but what is the chief Errand that sent us here, we have every Woman of us buried her respective Man.

Not that we value our selves upon that score, for God forbid we should; but Widows will speak the Truth let the consequence be what it will, and should you make ten thousand Acts to oblige us to hold our Tongues, it would signifie just nothing, we should break them all in a moment, and that with as much Alacrity as the Vintners in Town daily break the Adultery-Act. Well then we have all of us buried her respective Man, which we mention not, Heaven knows our Hearts, out of Oikentation, but with due Grief and Sorrow. We know a Man's value too well not to regret the loss of so serviceable a Creature. We had all of us good able Husbands, at least we'll say so now they are gone; and though perhaps we had some reason to complain of them when they were alive, yet we forgive them all their Faults and Infirmities, for that single good natured Act of dying, and leaving us once more to our selves.

The foolish People of *Athens* after they had lost a good King, would have no more of the kind, forsooth, lest a bad one should succeed him. But your Petitioners are not such a scrupulous sort of People: We that have had good-Husbands, are encouraged to try once more, out of hopes of meeting the same Success; and we that have had bad ones, are not for all that deterr'd from Matrimony, but hope to mend our hands in a second Bargain. After all, should we be deceived in our Expectations, the first may afford to undergo a little Penance since they were so happy before; and the latter being accustomed of old to bear Burdens, are therefore the better enabled to support themselves under them.

The Body of your Petitioners (for after so much Preface it is high time to come to business) consists of four several Classes; viz. the old Widows, the young or middle aged Widows, the rich Widows, and the poor Widows, and each of them presents you with a different Petition.

To begin then with the old Widows, (and that preheminnence is due to them upon the score of their Age and Experience) they humbly supplicate that you would be pleased to take their miserable Condition into Consideration. Old People according to the Proverb are twice Children; What wonder is it then if they still have a hankering after Childish Playthings, and long to have their Gums rubb'd with Coral? Pray don't mistake them, good Gentlemen, they mean it in a lawful, Matrimonial Sense, and hope you will not censure or think the worse of them for using this Freedom. They appeal to all the World who it is that most stand in want of warm, comfortable things, the young or the old: That 'tis the greatest Charity to relieve the last, needs no formal proof, all the Hospitals in the Kingdom speak as much; but alas in this uncharitable Age they don't expect to meet with many Friends. Upon this Consideration they intirely submit themselves to the Mercy of the House, not presuming to carry their Petition so high as to request you to force people to marry them; but only that you would recommend their Case to the benevolence of those Persons, who having lived wickedly and at large all their Life-time, are willing to compound for their Sins, and do Acts of supererogation in the last Scene of it. Nor are they difficult in their choice, they will sit down content with any thin; and Cripples with Wooden Legs will be chearfully tertained if they have received no damage in the distinguishing part.

Next to these come the rich Widows, and they earnestly beg of your Honourable House that you would make it Felony without Benefit of the Clergy, for any one to make Court to them before the mournful Twelfth-month is expired. They are so perpetually pestered with Suiters of all Complexions, that they can neither eat, nor sleep, nor pray for them. A new Favourite,

Favourite has not more humble Servants in a morning at his *Levee* nor the Commissioners of the Pay-Office a greater crowd of surly, grumbling Seamen than they have. Nay, some of their passionate Admirers have had the Impudence to accost them upon this Chapter as they have been following their Husband's Corps to the Grave, in the very height of their Sorrow, and in the midst of the Funeral Pomp. If you think it too severe to make it Felony in Persons so offending, they desire you to commute the Punishment, and oblige every Person trespassing after that manner to marry some poor Widow as fancy inclines him; Which is all the Favour that the poor Widows beg at your hands.

And now comes up the main Body of the young and middle-aged Widows, who as they are by far the most numerous, especially since the Wars have made such havock among the Husbands, so they crave leave to lay their Petitions at your feet. But before they do that, they think it convenient to remove all those popular Slanders and Objections, which ill natured People have been long accustomed to level against Widows in general; and because their Adversaries shall have no reason to complain that their Arguments are mangled, they will urge them as home as either themselves or their best Advocates could do it for them.

'Tis in the first place pretended that Widows want several of those Recommendations that set off the Sex, and particularly a Maiden head, without which no Wife they say can be acceptable; that they are still trumping up Stories of their former Husbands, purposely to confront their new ones, and so excessively talkative that nothing but Deafness is an Antidote against the Noise; that marrying a Widow is like splitting upon a Rock where others have been ship-wracked before. After this they run the Metaphor into *Long-Lane*, Second-hand Gloves, Cloaths of another's wearing, and the Lord knows what impertinent Stuff: But we shall answer them all in order.

To begin then with the loss of a Maidenhead, about which they make so horrid a Clamour, we could tell them sad Stories of several of their Betters that on the Wedding-night have fancied they have dug up this same Chimerical Treasure, though it was stolen many Months before; nay, we have a hundred and more of our Company here, that if occasion were, could attest this upon their own personal knowledge. So certain it is that the nicest Criticks among the Men may be as easily imposed upon in this Affair, as your pretenders to Antiquity in counterfeit Medals. But if no Woman can please them without this imaginary Wealth (and indeed 'tis no more, for most People take it upon Trust) we see no reason why a young Widow may not be as capable of obliging them as the best Virgin in the World. 'Tis but using a few Astringents before, and, at the critical Minute, crying out, *Fie, Sir, pray, Sir, will you split me up? will you murder me alive? Can you take any pleasure in what is so painful to another?* And the Sparks are satisfied they have made a real Sacrifice, though in Truth no more Blood was shed in the Encounter, than we see upon the Stage when one Actor kills another. If this is their dear Diversion (and by the bye 'tis a sure sign of their ill Nature that they cannot be pleased but at the expence of the Party, whom they pretend to love so dearly) rather than lose them, we promise them to howl, and sigh, and roar every Night in the Year, as heartily as an Ox, when he's led to the Slaughter-house, and so entertain them still with the Ceremony, at least, of their dearly beloved Maiden-Head.

In the next place why should we not be permitted to refresh the Memory of a dull lazy husband with the noble performances of his Predecessors. The merry *K. Charles* the Second's Reign took the liberty to talk of the Glorious Conquests of our former fighting Monarchs, and yet for all that thought themselves as good Subjects as any in the kingdom. If the reproof is just where a God's name lies the harm, and surely the Wife must be allowed to be the best judge of that affair. *Oh no*, say they, 'tis not the Horse but the Man that best knows whether he rides easie. Content: But does not the Horse likewise know whether his Rider carries true Horse-

Horseman's weight, and whether he sits even in the Saddle. If not, why would Bucephalus suffer himself to be backed by none but Alexander the Great?

But then *we are excessive talkative.* So are they, and so are most of our Sex, but especially the longing Maids, and under correction, if it is a Sin we are of opinion it fits better upon us than upon them. This is not all, *Marrying a Widow is like splashing upon a Rock where others have been Shipwreck'd.* Well, we are glad however 'tis like something. But since one simily is best drove out by another. Why not, *like drinking in a room where some honest Gentleman has made merry before.* Since nothing will go down with these Squamish Creatures in the Matrimonial way but a spick and span new Virgin, we wonder why they don't keep up the frolick in every thing else; why as often as they drink they don't call still for a Virgin Glas; why they don't every Meal call for a Virgin Plate; why they don't still pull out a Virgin Snuff-box, lye in Virgin Sheets, talk Politicks in a Virgin Coffee-House, and pursue their dearly beloved variety to the end of the Chapter. Lastly, their indignation rises at the thoughts of *Long-lane, and all Second-hand things whatever.* If the Sparks are resolved to be true to their Argument, we are well satisfied they must e'en say good night to all thinking and writing and talking: For at present they Think at Second hand, and Write and Talk at Second hand, and this objection, as terrible as it looks, is a third bare weather-beaten Second-hand Objection with a witness.

A late Monarch of happy Memory, who was inferior to none but Solomon in Natural Philosophy, and chiefly in what relates to our Sex, was often heard to say, that getting of a Maiden Head was a drudgery fit for none but Porters. We save all that labour and pains, for there needs no great trouble to enter a City when a Breach is once made in the Walls, and our Husbands have that satisfaction as to see their ground ploughed up ready to their hands. To conclude all, a Widow is a tryed Gun, and carries the Tower Mark upon her; now who knows but a Maid may split in the proving.

Having thus justified the State of Widowhood against all the objections that are used to be made against it, we have nothing more to add, but that you'd be pleased to give your consent to the three following Articles.

First, That all Persons who are not of known parts and abilities, may not only be rendred incapable of marrying Maids or such as are reputed Maids, but confined to the choice of Widows only. This we request not so much for our own advantage, as for the ease of the Men; for you know several people can make a shift to keep the King's high way, that are not able to leap a Ditch or break open a Quickset.

Secondly, That all Persons resolving to marry before the age of twenty one, if they have made no Natural Experiments before that time, shall be likewise obliged to take a Widow, as they do Pilots in difficult or unknown places. 'Tis an ancient but well grounded complaint, that where two Maiden Heads meet they produce nothing but meer Butter Prints, addle-pated Fops, and dull senseless sleepy Boobies. Now if you pass this into an Act, in all probability it will contribute much to the improving of our present degenerate Race, and certainly if ever we wanted solid heads, 'tis at this conjuncture.

Thirdly, and Lastly, That all Widows during their Widow hood may be excused from the Taxes, for is it not hard, good Gentlemen, to pay four Shillings in the Pound for empty Houses. We hope you will consider farther of these our reasonable Applications.

And your Petitioners as in Duty, &c

FINIS.

A New Bill drawn up by a *Committee of Grievances*, in Reply to the Ladies and Batchelors Petition and Remonstrance, &c.

Virgins and Batchelors, or rather Ladies and Gentlemen (for that is your safer name, and so we would advise you to title your selves) we have received both your Addresses, and both your Suits lye before us. We confess that, to do you equal right, you both plead strongly, and pray heartily: However, the seivour of the Suppliant does not always argue the honesty of the Petition. The most unreasonable most unjust things in the World may be as vigorously pray'd for as the best. A man in his angry moments may as zealously wish to see his honest Neighbour hang'd, as he ever wish'd in a fit of Sickness to be sav'd. The same Tradesmans Wife that at Morning Service cou'd think of nothing but *Abrabams* bosom, before night perhaps has alter'd her note, and pray'd with greater vehemence to meet her Gallant.

The Merit therefore, and not the Oratory of the Plea is the business of our Examination. But before we descend to particulars, we must so far joyn with you, to own your Cause (that we may use your own phrase) a matter of the greatest consequence that ever came within our Walls. For *Hymen* and *Love*, *Generation* and *Progeny*, the fulfilling of the great first Commandment, *Increase* and *Multiply*, is indeed an Importance so high, that not only the present Race of Mankind, the now occupants of the World, but even the yet unborn are concerned in it.

Having therefore duly weigh'd the whole Controversie between the Petitioners and Remonstrancers, we must declare our ready tenderness, and without partiality, favourable Inclinations both to the Complainer, and Complainants, the aggrieved Petitioners. For having consider'd, that long Customs out of the memory of man, are by the *British* Constitution equivalent to the most binding Laws; we find-upon search that *England* has been always the *Heaven of Women*, and also by another customary female Claim, that a *Woman never loses her Honor*; and consequently that the practis'd Deference and Complaisance to the Sex is an unalienable Right: Upon the said premises duly consider'd, as we sit here not to destroy Fundamentals, but to support 'em, we must allow a great many unquestion'd Prerogatives as their just and natural Right; a fair *Magna Charta* on the soft Sexes side.

Nevertheless, not to come to any Conclusive Determination; *Causa inaudita*, we think it highly consistent with our own Honour and Justice to discuss the main points in dispute between the *Ladies* and *Batchelors*, before we come to any final decision on either side.

First, then we cannot but take notice that the Batchelors very unjustly charge the Petitioners with *Difficult Courtship*; the pretended Servitude of tedious *Jacob-Premiseships*, &c. being in the whole a most notoriously false and malicious suggestion. For how can any man in his right wits believe that ten thousand *Green-sickness Maidens*, subscribers to the Petition, can be those hard-hearted slow *Rachels*

Mistresses

Mistresses (as if Life, Health and Love were so little dear to them) that they would rather dye Martyrs to Oatmeal, Loam and Chalk, than accept such able Doctors and such pleasant Physick for their Recoveries, in that only *Effix Viri, Man and Matrimony*.

Nay, do not the whole Body of Petitioners most frankly and generously avow (both for their Majesties and the Nations Service) their ready Inclinations and Desires of recruiting the yearly *Flandrian* Mortality, by an immediate Consummation and Propagation. Is not the fair *Festival-sheet* hung out, with all the heartiest Bridal Compliment, of *Wake Sleepers, rise and eat*? And can the ungrateful Bachelors talk of *Seven years Courtship* after such indearing Invitations! But however, if by chance, once in an Age, they meet with a *thick-shell'd bitter Almond*, must the generality of the Sex, the *tenderer Pistacheros*, requiring not half the cracking labour, and with ten times the sweeter Kernel, be falsely reproacht and reviled?

And whereas the Bachelors ridiculously object their fear and dread of entering into the Matrimonial state, from the suggested Frailty and *Brilleness* of the *weaker Vessels*: to obviate the folly of that Fear, and the shallowness of that argument, we declare, *Nemine contradicente*, the fair Sex, (not to diminish their value) to be true precious *Porcelane*, and it lies only in the gentle usage and tenderness of the handling, to preserve 'em.

And we farther declare this Petition of the longing Ladies, notwithstanding the scurrilous Bachelors ridiculing and censorious Reflections, to be as honest a Supplication, as a *Prayer for daily Bread*: for every Thing *would live*.

And whereas one great Bar to Matrimony, are the common pretensions of Good Husbandry, in choosing rather to *buy at Hackney*, than keep a *Milcher of their own*; as thereby endeavouring to avoid the Expensive Concomitants of Wedlock. Now as these unthinking Remonstrancers never consider the dangerous Risques of their own *Latitudinarian* principles and practices, in incurring the hazard of coming to *Sassaaparilla* and *Guaiacum*, and the rest of the *dry Drugs*, infinitely more expensive than the objected Matrimonial Sweet-meats and Caudles, Gossippings and Christning, &c. the Confectioners a much easier than the Apothecaries Bill, and one *Dr. Wall* a heavier incident charge than two *Chamberlains*.

We therefore think fit to lay before their Eyes the too common and too threatening malevolence of those malignant Ascendants, *viz. Venus* in the lower House, and *Mercury* in the upper one; and withal advise 'em to reflect that the Nursery of a whole *Fire-side* is not half the expence of rearing of *gallipng Runners* into *standing Gouts*. We could likewise further convince 'em, that the universal haycock of all the *Mayms* and *Cripples*, from *French Chain-shot* and Splinters got bewixt Wind and Water, is much the vaster Hospital Rent-charge, than the Pensions of *Chelsey* and *Chatham*.

However, if no Counsel nor Precept can reduce 'em from their infamous Reprobation to the honourable state, we hereby enact this punishment of their Apostasy, That they live in their sins, and dye in their shame; and as the last publick brand, be utterly debarr'd even that common Civility of bribing the Searchers, and softening the Bill of Mortality, by slurring a *shame-fac'd Consumption* upon a scandalous *Rot*.

But to begin our Examination into the Petitioners greatest and loudest longu'd Grievance, the *Multitude of Misses*; and all the fatal Influences from those reigning Ascendants; that not only (as the Petitioners modestly complain) *divers*, but (as we may fully add) *payson* those wholesome streams which would otherwise run in the regular Channel of Matrimony; we shall here subjoyn our Power and Authority

Authority for accomplishing a thorough Reformation in this particular; with the following Inflictions and Punishments for the discouragement and suppression of the said notorious Vice and Enormity.

Whereas therefore, to the scandal of the Age, it has been too often experienced, that witty and beautiful Spouse has been abandon'd for hard-favour'd dowdy Miss; under no other shadow of excuse, than the pretended discovery of having found a Fiddle abroad, and therefore slighting the unmusical Instrument at home; Now in utter detestation of such abominable pretences, and such unnatural Conjugal-Abdication, together with the manifest Justice of *Lex Talionis*, we do hereby *License* and *Authorize* the aforesaid fair Abandon'd (as well for the Alleviation of doleful Widow'd nights, and Virgin Threats; as for the support of the Family, possibly in no small danger from such neglect and Desertion) to borrow the Assistance of some dignified Younger Brother, to raise Heirs, &c. without incurring the *Premunure* of Elopement; or upon Non-Readiness and Failure of such honourable supply, to have free leave to take up with some courser Domestick Menial, though but to the homely Tute of *Drive on Coachman*.

And in like manner 'tis Resolved and Order'd, That all those *Ramblers* and *Strays* under that misleading *Ignis Fatui*, the sweet sin of *Variety*, that shall therefore grasp at outlying *Plutalister*, though possibly, naturally so weak-gifted, as to be scarce sufficiently qualified for due Incumbence at home, shall for the said wilful offence of Non-Residence, incur the Penalty of *Sequestration*, to be supply'd by a *Curate*, from the choice of the *Parish*.

And whereas the fair Complainants too loudly inveigh against their powerful Rival *Wine*, and the present too spreading Idolatry of the Bottle, and the dangerous concomitants thereof; which the Bachelors endeavour to soften and sweeten, by insinuating the Juice of the Grape no ill-meaning Enemy to the God of Love's Subjects. For adjustment of the Dispute, be it resolved, That *Wine* be no farther encouraged than as *Amorum famulus*, a good Servant but a bad Master; to be indulg'd and cherish'd as a moderate Grace-cup, to make Love chirp, but not sleep; and be used for Sauce and Relish, not for Soupe and Pickle. Be it therefore enacted, That for due punishment of those violent Claret-hunters, that by abuse of this lawful and limited Indulgence, do outrun all bounds, to the making a toy of a pleasure; and a tedious tiresome Fox-chase of it; it may and shall be lawful for the sweet neglected *Venus*, like the old modest *Diana*, to punish all such capital offenders with the Front of an *Asteeon*; it being the opinion of this Committee, that the wilful neglect of Family Duty, and all false measures of due Benevolence fall as justly under *Parliamentary* Censure and Last, as the false packing of *Butter*.

And whereas the crying shame of the daily scandalous Rhimes, the licentious scurrilous Pamphlet Doggrel and Playhouse Farce upon the holy state of Matrimony, is no small Grievance of the Petitioners. This Honourable Committee, as fully empower'd to search Papers and Records, have found the said Libels to be wholly matter of Malice and Calumny, the generality of the Authors being either some scribbling, aspiring, slighted pretender to some fair disdainful *Celia*; and therefore in pure spite and revenge, pelted and persecuted with Satyr and Lamppoon, for no other sin but her being deaf and invincible to Dity and Sobnet; and thereupon the whole Honourable state of Wedlock, maliciously vilified, with the outcry of *dry meat*, for no other reason but that themselves are thrown out of the Chase, and excluded the Game: Or otherwise if such Wedlock-railing be the Venome and Gall of any marry'd Author, we conclude it the product of some very hard Bargain, as possibly some old-rapp'd leaky Broach at home, and thereupon

upon his Pallat wholly depraved and fow'd with this nauseous Draught of Lee^d. Nevertheless all the said villanous Ribaldry and Libels, as hatched and contrived for sowing Sedition and somenting Schism within the peaceable and united Ecclesiastical Provinces of *Hymen* and *Love*, we do hereby adjudge and sentence to the old doom of *Heretico Comburendo*.

And whereas our fair Petitioners enforce their Suit, from our condescension to the humble Debates of cutting the Rivers *Lug* and *Wye*, &c. Be it therefore Resolved and Ordered accordingly, That the present *Virgin Shallows*, hitherto of no farther use than the driving a poor Watermill, &c. be dug into Deeps and Channels, and made Navigable for Traders and Voyagers, and so render'd useful to the publick for the serviceable bearing of Bulk and Burthen.

Provided still, that all the fair Bridal pretenders shall bring their whole Loaf to the Spousal Board, and not have any of the Kissing Crust pared off by any hungry Sharper for Breakfast, before the good man in Black has said Grace for the Nuptial-night Supper, with the rest of the usual Ceremonies of *Fall to in Gods Name*.

But if by any frail mischance, an unhappy falling Fair, under pretence of a pure untoucht Domestick Utenfil, shall bring a craz'd Pipkin into play; she shall be obliged by a true and thorough Reformation, and Engagement of her future more steady Uprightness, to give good Security that a crackt Maidenhead, like a broken Bone, shall be strongest where 'tis set again, or otherwise to forfeit all Right and Benefit of our favour and protection.

Lastly, be it order'd, in favour to the Petitioners propos'd Supply towards recruiting the humane dearth and scarcity made by the hungry Devourer *War*, That a Clause be inserted to root out of all the Female Physick-gardens, and indeed from out the whole Commonwealth, those dangerous Plants call'd *Cover-shame*, alias *Savine*, and other *anti-conceptive* Weeds and Poysons, those notorious Restoratives of slender Shapes, and tender Reputation, to the loud and crying shame of *Love lost*, and a *Good Thing thrown away*.

As for what relates to the Chaplains, we are willing to allow 'em plenty of Meat, Drink and Tobacco, the most zealous part of their Supplication; nay, to sit down at Table with their Patrons, provided they don't take upon them to censure the management of the Family. But whereas they petition to be freed from any obligation to marry the Chamber-maid; we can by no means assent to it; the *Abigail* by immemorial custom being a *Deadend*, and belonging to Holy Church.

We thank the Poets for their good will to the Government, as appears by their Proposal to raise a fund of 600000*l*. for the support of it; but don't think it convenient to raise any Money either out of them, or the Ribbon-weavers. The only Tax we lay upon them is to Canonize all our Heroes that dye in *Flanders*, and to record their Victories in Verse. And this will be no burthensome employment for them.

And lastly, as for the Widdows, provided they'll engage never to talk bawdy, and quote the sayings, or praise the valour of their dead Husbands, we will grant all and every Clause in their Petition, viz. The old Widdows shall have their Gums rubb'd with Coral. The rich shall be indulg'd a twelvemonths rest. The poor shall have the forfeitures they beg for; and the young receive full satisfaction in their three Articles.

*A Catalogue of PETITIONS,
ordered to be drawn up and
Presented to the Honourable
House at their next Session.*

A Petition of the Brewers and Butchers, that the former may be incorporated with the Vintners; and the latter with the Apothecaries.

A Petition of the Banbox-men and Trunk-makers, that the *Athenian-Mercury*, and all Weekly Papers of the like nature be continued.

A Petition of 20000 Tradesmen, that if their Wives offer to draw Bills more than once a Night upon them, they may be empowered honourably to reject them.

A Petition of the Quack-Doctors, that the Constables may not disturb the industrious Night-walkers in the *Strand*, *Fleet-street*, and *Cheapside*.

A Petition of Doctor *S-l-m-n*, and two more of the Fraternity, that they may have the sole benefit of a new Religion, by them lately Invented, and that no other Persons presume to interlope upon them.

A Petition of the Quakers, that their bare word may be equivalent to Swearing; and Nonsense to true Reasoning; and likewise that it may be lawful for them to Fornicate out of their own Tribe.

A Petition of all the married Women in the Kingdom of *England*, *Dominion of Wales*, and Town of *Berwick* upon *Tweed*, that the Dog-days be immediately repealed.

A Catalogue of Petitions.

A Petition of the moderate Divines, that the 30th. of Jan. and 29th. of May be discarded out of the Almanack, as being great Eye sores to the Godly Party.

A Petition of the Maids, that the Mosaical Signs of Virginity, be declared void and unnecessary, and unfit to be required under the Christian Dispensation.

A Petition of the Ribbon-Weavers, that Shoulder-Knots and Pantaloon of happy Memory be revived.

A Petition of the Booksellers to declare, that Licensing of Books is Popish and Superstitious, and destructive of the liberty of the Subject.

A Petition of the Inhabitants of *White Fryars*, that their Bounds be enlarged, that they may have room enough to receive the broken Merchants and Tradesmen that daily flock in to them.

A Petition of the Poets for a speedy Restauration of Claret, and the utter Banishment of little diminutive *Pagan Bottles*.

A Petition of the Midwives and Highway-men that *Savin* and *Hemp* be rooted out of the Common-wealth.

A Petition of the Glasiers and Tallow-Chandlers, that it may be lawful to break Windows on Thanksgiving-days, where no Lights are set out.

A Petition of *Dr. Ores*, that every Evidence for the future shall be obliged to repair to him for a Licence.

A Petition of the Prisoners in *Newgate*, that their Confessions and dying Speeches may not be Printed before they are Hanged.

A Petition of *Dr. Partridge* that no Almanack-maker pretend to Prophecie for the Government but himself.

A Petition of the Fiddlers, that kicking down Stairs, and broken Heads be reckoned no Scandal.

A Petition of the Players, that they may be allowed plurality of Wives, in order to be sure of a Maidenhead once in their Lives.

A second Petition of the Booksellers, that when a dull heavy Book lies upon their hands, it may be publicly burnt to promote the Sale of it.

A Petition of Bully *D---son*, and the rest of his Brethren, that Swearing and Roaring be adjudged as effectual a sign of Valour, as Fighting.

A Catalogue of Petitions.

A Petition of several young Gentlemen of the Inns of Court, that a Statue be erected to Dr. ~~W. B.~~ at the publick Charge.

A Petition of the Northern Associates, for a speedy conclusion of the War, because at present the People can't spare Money to go to Law.

A Petition of the Harlots, that Pluralities be denied to all married Women, of what Degree or Quality soever.

A Petition of the Coffee Houses, that they may be privileged in Fornication up Stairs, and for Treason and false news below.

A Petition of the Country Parsons, that, in favour of them, the House will be pleased to take off the additional Duty upon Tobacco.

A Petition of the City Clergymen's Daughters, that *Increase and Multiply* be made the Eleventh Commandment.

A Petition of the Knights of the Post, that all the Pillories in the Kingdom be burnt on the next *Thanksgiving day*.

~~A Petition of the Tradesmen in and about London, to prohibit the exportation of Leather, lest if the War should continue a Year or two longer, we should be forced, like our Ancestors, to make our own Defence.~~

A Petition of the Drawers about the Temple and Covent Garden, that they may be allowed to lie a Bed till Eleven.

A Petition of the Royal Society, that the Comb-makers, Moule-Trap Men, and *Athenians*, be suppressed, as Interlopers upon them.

A Petition of the Chimney Sweepers, that they may have the scowring of all *Ecclesiastical* Consciences every Spring and Fall.

A Petition of the City that none be suffered to talk Treason, but such as are well affected to the Common-wealth.

A Petition of the College of Physicians, that the Importation of *Dutch* Doctors be prohibited, as prejudicial to the Manufacture of our own Universities.

A Petition of the Taylors, that leave be given to bring in a long Bill to promote new Fashions.

A Petition of the Seamen, that the Parsons may not meddle with Politicks, but every one keep in his own Element.

A Petition of the Barbers that they may be made Free of the Church, since the Divines have usurped upon their Trade by turning Trimmers.

A Petition of the Country Inn-keepers, that the Soldiers quartered

A Catalogue of Petitions.

zared in their Homes would be content to Tap their Hogsheads, but not their Wives or Daughters.

A Petition of the Dissenting Divines, that none shall be admitted into the *Class*, but Men of strong Lungs, and stronger Backs.

A Petition of the Anabaptists, that they may be empower'd to erect a publick Dipping Pond at *Lambeth Ferry*.

A Petition of the Painters, that they may have leave to enter all the Conventicles in Town, and draw their respective Patterns in their proper Colours.

A Petition of the Wastcoaters of *Wapping*, that it may be lawful for them to go sixteen Months with Child, in cases of necessity.

A Petition of the Printers, that all distinctions of Bawdry, Blasphemy and Treason be utterly abolished.

A Petition of the Proctors of the Commons to have Fornication encouraged, that they may have the sole punishing of it afterwards.

A Petition of the Claret-drinkers, that Red Noses shall qualify People for all sorts of Preferment.

A Petition of several Mayors and Aldermen that Money be adjudged to comprehend both Wit and Sense, and good breeding.

A Petition of several Recorders in the Kingdom, that making of Speeches be utterly abolished, unless Bulls be tolerated.

A Petition of the Ordinary of *Newgate*, that all sorts of breaking be declared sinful, but especially Sabbath-breaking.

A Petition of the Orphans, that the Monument be hung with Mourning once a Year, and that at the expence of the Chamber.

A Petition of the several Ladies living near *Westminster*, that all Deserters be brought to condign punishment.

A Petition of the *Athenians*, that they may have a Patent for their new Invention of making second hand *Spiras*.

A Petition of the Parish Clerks, that a day be set apart to Celebrate the Pious Memory of *Hopkins* and *Sternhold*, and that the City Poet draw up the Service for the day.

*And for your Worships then we'll pray,
For eke, for ever, and for ay.*

F I N I S.

